

Open Letter by Christ the Good Shepherd Church

For Immediate Submission

Subject: Misinformation Bill and Freedom of Expression



Dear friends and fellow believers,

We write to you today with love and humility to address a matter of utmost importance: the proposed *Misinformation Bill 2024*. As a church, we feel compelled to share our thoughts on this issue both here and if invited, in public to this inquiry in Canberra, as it directly impacts our ability to spread the message of our Lord Jesus Christ through online channels.

There are three major ways that this Misinformation Bill affects our work for Christ and pertain to why we oppose the passing of this Bill.

1. **Interference with Critical Work:** *The Misinformation Bill threatens to interfere with the critical work that our church does through its online content. Our social media accounts serve as platforms to share the teachings of Christ, provide spiritual guidance, and foster a sense of community among our followers. If this bill becomes law, the definitions outlined in the September 2024 version of the bill could lead to the removal of our content and accounts. This would be a grave disservice to our congregation and hinder our mission to spread love, hope, and faith to our herd both in Australia and abroad.*
2. **Condemnation of Political Censorship:** *We categorically condemn the use of the Wakeley Stabbing incident to further any political censorship agenda. It is unfortunate that such events are exploited for political gain. As a religious institution, we believe in transparency and truth. The attempt to manipulate public discourse by using this incident is deeply troubling on the state of politics in Australia.*
3. **Rejection of Misinformation Bills:** *We reject any misinformation or online censorship bill proposed by government. Our faith teaches us to seek truth, and censorship should not be the solution. Instead, let us focus on the light through educating and empowering our communities to discern reliable information from falsehoods.*

In conclusion, we urge lawmakers and citizens alike to consider the implications of the Misinformation Bill 2024. Let us protect our right to express our faith and engage in meaningful dialogue without fear of suppression. May the grace of our Lord guide us in these challenging times.

~ Christ the Good Shepherd Church